Rehabilitation activities in Gujarat

2774. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that but for FICCI-CARE, many NGOs have backed out of rehabilitation in the quake-hit villages of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of permanent houses built since last years' major earthquake; and

(d) what are the other rehabilitation measures extended to quake-hit villages by Government, with the help of other agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) According to the Government of Gujarat, 46 NGOs who originally showed interest had withdrawn mainly due to (i) lack of experience in complex areas like private housing; (ii) scarce financial resources with them; and (iii) inability of the partnering NGO to mobilize villagers in joining the NGO for reconstruction of the village.

(c) and (d) The State Government have reported that 8,00,207 houses have been reconstructed/repaired, as on 31st January, 2002. According to available information, rehabilitation/reconstruction measures have been undertaken in various sectors which include housing, health, education, irrigation, public buildings, roads & bridges, rural & urban infrastructure, cottage & rural, urban development & urban housing and agriculture.

Horticulture Research Centre at Andipatti

2775. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up Horticulture Research Centre at Andipatti in Theni district in Tamil Nadu, considering the abundant growth of Jasmine and other flowers in the area;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) There is already one centre of All India Coordinated Research Project on Floriculture at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. This Centre is catering to the needs of the region.

Direct purchase of cotton from growers

2776. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to purchase cotton directly from the cotton growers, and eliminate middlemen between the farmers and CCI; and

(b) the action taken to assist the cotton farmers in ensuring reasonable prices of cotton produced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), a Central nodal agency, makes purchases directly from Cotton growers in the regulated market. CCI extends its infrastructure by utilizing the Co-operative set up in each State.

(b) To protect the interest of cotton farmers the Government: (i) fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for different varieties of cotton during each season and authorizes the CCI to undertake price support operation if market prices touch MSP level, (ii) hiked the import duty on cotton from 5 per cent to 10 per cent to restrain import, (iii) made cotton export free with effect from July, 2001 dispensing with the earlier export quota of different agencies and the